



## TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE JERRY PATTERSON, COMMISSIONER

Office of Communications • Mark Dallas Loeffler, Director  
1700 N. Congress Ave. • Austin, TX 78701-1495 • 512-463-5339 • FAX: 512-475-1415

### PRESS RELEASE

## Federal reptile dysfunction defeated

Patterson stands up to federal government, claims victory

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**Contact: Jim Suydam**  
**512-463-2716**  
**[jim.suydam@glo.texas.gov](mailto:jim.suydam@glo.texas.gov)**

AUSTIN — - Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson today claimed victory in an initial battle after U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced federal bureaucrats will not list the dunes sagebrush lizard as an endangered species.

"Texans stood up and were heard," Patterson said. "The drive to list this lizard wasn't based on science, but was in response to abusive lawsuits filed against the federal government by a radical environmental group - and Texans showed that we don't get intimidated so easily."

Oil and gas production in the Permian Basin is safe from overreaching federal entanglements for now, Patterson said, but more work needs to be done to fix the Endangered Species Act. The lawsuit that prompted the proposed listing of the dunes sagebrush lizard also proposed listing more than 250 other species - 21 of which live in Texas.

"Today it's the dunes sagebrush lizard, tomorrow it's another species to settle another lawsuit," Patterson said. "The real problem is how the Endangered Species Act is being abused."

Patterson is going to D.C. next week to testify before the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee hearing on "*Taxpayer-funded Litigation: Benefitting Lawyers and Harming Species, Jobs and Schools.*"

Patterson will explain how taxpayers are being forced to fund the very lawsuits being filed by radical environmental groups that result in proposals to declare more species endangered. "While Texas landowners may be shocked to learn they paid the legal fees for these groups, they should be horrified to learn these very same radical environmental groups are funded with grants from you and me," Patterson said. "We, as taxpayers, are paying for them to sue our federal government and work against our interests and that's just dumb."

From 2007 to 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service gave \$680,492 in tax money to the Wild Earth Guardians, according to congressional testimony. During that same time, the Wild Earth Guardians sued U.S. Fish and Wildlife 76 times, including the lawsuit that triggered the proposal to list the dunes sagebrush lizard.

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